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ISSUE 285 APRIL 2015

100% CANADIAN

SINCE 1982

# common ground

FREE MAGAZINE

War is not  
Healthy  
for children or  
other living things

Another Mother for Peace

There is no way to peace  
Peace is the way

Mahatma Gandhi

Power in the Blood

Buffy Sainte-Marie

# Life is Sacred

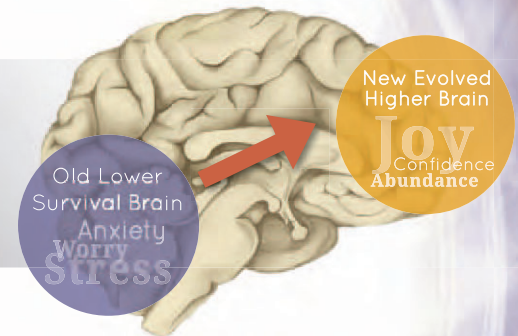


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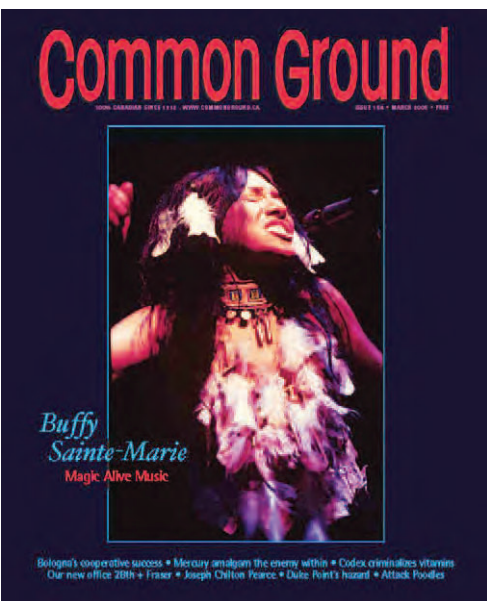
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\*Reference: Anti-Influenza virus activities of commercial oregano oils and their carriers. Journal of Applied Pharmaceutical Science 2012; 02(07) 214-18.



# Universal Soldier

## The evolution of a song



See Buffy Sainte-Marie interview in our March 2005 edition in Back Issues / Archives of [commonground.ca](http://commonground.ca)

Vietnam was public knowledge and had escalated, I was stranded in a San Francisco airport and saw soldiers who were wheeling in bodies on stretchers and their wounded buddies in wheelchairs, all shot up and bandaged. I talked with them, asking, 'Who's responsible? You, the soldiers? The generals who give you the orders? The politicians who make war decisions? Or is it 'We the People,' who elect them?'



I talked with them, asking, 'Who's responsible? You, the soldiers? The generals who give you the orders? The politicians who make war decisions? Or is it 'We the People,' who elect them?'

"I kept thinking about what I had seen and those questions aboard the flight to Toronto and in the basement of the Purple Onion coffeehouse in Yorkville. I worked on *Universal Soldier* like a college student looking for an A. I knew soldiers could be between five foot two and six foot four and [between] the ages of 17 and 31 so I included information like that. The line, *He's fighting for Canada, he's fighting for France, he's fighting for the USA*, unfortunately, is as true today. I'd been studying Oriental philosophy and wanted to include all religions; I would add Islam now. I used *never sees the writing on the wall* because we have learned nothing from history. Just look around. I wanted to warn people, to get them out of their classrooms and onto their feet, like I am trying to do now with *Power in the Blood*. Like I said later, 'You don't want to give it to them in an enema.'

"I wanted people to understand that we are all responsible. And I don't mean only the people who are like me. I mean communicate to all the people. There's no sense being a closet genius. It doesn't do me any good to keep *continued p.5...*

It's been 10 years since Buffy Sainte-Marie graced the cover of *Common Ground* and more than five decades since she wrote *Universal Soldier*, her international anthem to peace, which is just as vital and timely today. In a 2005 *Common Ground* interview, publisher Joseph Roberts stated, "*Universal Soldier* is just as timely today as when you wrote it." She agreed, saying, "Yes, unfortunately." Today, she has the same response, adding, "The root issue is always the same: corporate greed."

As the drums of war beat more loudly – and Stephen Harper commits more Canadian soldiers to conflict – she shares the evolution of *Universal Soldier* below. Please see subsequent pages for our cover story on this timeless singer-songwriter, pacifist and social activist.

"In 1962, a couple of years before

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**Correction:** In the Nutrispeak column in our  
March issue, the start time for the April event was  
mistakenly noted as 8:30pm. It starts at 7pm.



Cover by Kris Kozak  
Photo courtesy True North Records

## Stephen Harper, stop this stupid war

A mother nurses her baby in the café where I write as calm, beautiful music wafts through the space. Life is sacred. Our cover quotations honour peace and the life it nourishes. Sadly, countries too quick to anger still go to war and kill. Drone strikes and CF-18s are killing children in Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan and other target countries. We are tricked by regimes wrapped in our flags and glorifying prior wars, even WW I promoted as the War to End All Wars. PM Harper is sending Canada to war based on these old de-  
ceits. It is not a *just* war, it is *just* a war. When Albert Einstein was asked what he thought about killing in war he responded, "Killing in war is murder". The Bible and other Holy Scriptures admonish us to not kill. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers," not the war mongers. Stephen Harper, have you no shame? Stop this im-  
moral, illegal war.

In 1962 Buffy Sainte-Marie knew the score, expressed in her song *Universal Soldier*. In 2015 we now must evolve from Universal Soldiers to Universal Peacemakers. Today Buffy's new album *Power in the Blood* again inspired us to act. With our true heart strong and free, let us be courageous for peace my friends. Thank you.



...*Universal Soldier* from p.3

the medicine in the bottle. The last line, *Brothers, can't you see this is not the way we put an end to war?* wasn't meant to scold, but as a question to someone you love. And the music ends on an unresolved chord.

"I sold the publishing rights for \$1 to a guy I met at the Gaslight Cafe in Greenwich Village. He wrote the contract on a napkin. In 1964, I signed a record deal, but I didn't even know what a lawyer was and used the company's – a mistake. Donovan recorded *Universal Soldier* in '65 and 10 years later I bought it back for 25,000 bucks – the good news is that I had enough money, after I had a few hits. I tell these stories – particularly to Aboriginal women – because we have to know who we're dealing with, not just in the music business, but all the greedy global corporations.

In 1967, a GI on a troop carrier headed to Vietnam wrote lines from the song on the canvas bottom of the bunk above him:

*You're the one who must decide*

*Who's to live and who's to die*

*You're the one who gives his body*

*As a weapon of the war*

*And without you, all this killing can't go on.*

"When the canvas was donated to the Smithsonian Institute, in 2004, they wrote in their magazine that it was a 'mystery poem.' They apologized and sent me about 700 letters, faxes, emails that pointed out that I had written that song. A lot of them explained details of how the song had changed their lives. That was very heartening. It was very kind of them to share their points of view. Usually, I don't get to know about how songs impact people's lives. To sit down and read their letters and feel those feelings coming from guys who are actually affected by a song like that, it was really quite moving.

"It's about the personal responsibility of all of us," she says of the song that was inducted into the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2005. "Because we can't blame just the soldier for the war or just the career military officer or just the politician. We have to blame ourselves too since we are living in an era where we actually elect our politicians, including Stephen Harper." <

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# Power in the Blood

## A conversation with Buffy Sainte-Marie

she continues to celebrate what she calls “the sanctity of life, the splendour of Mother Nature,” mixed up with scathing political and social commentary.

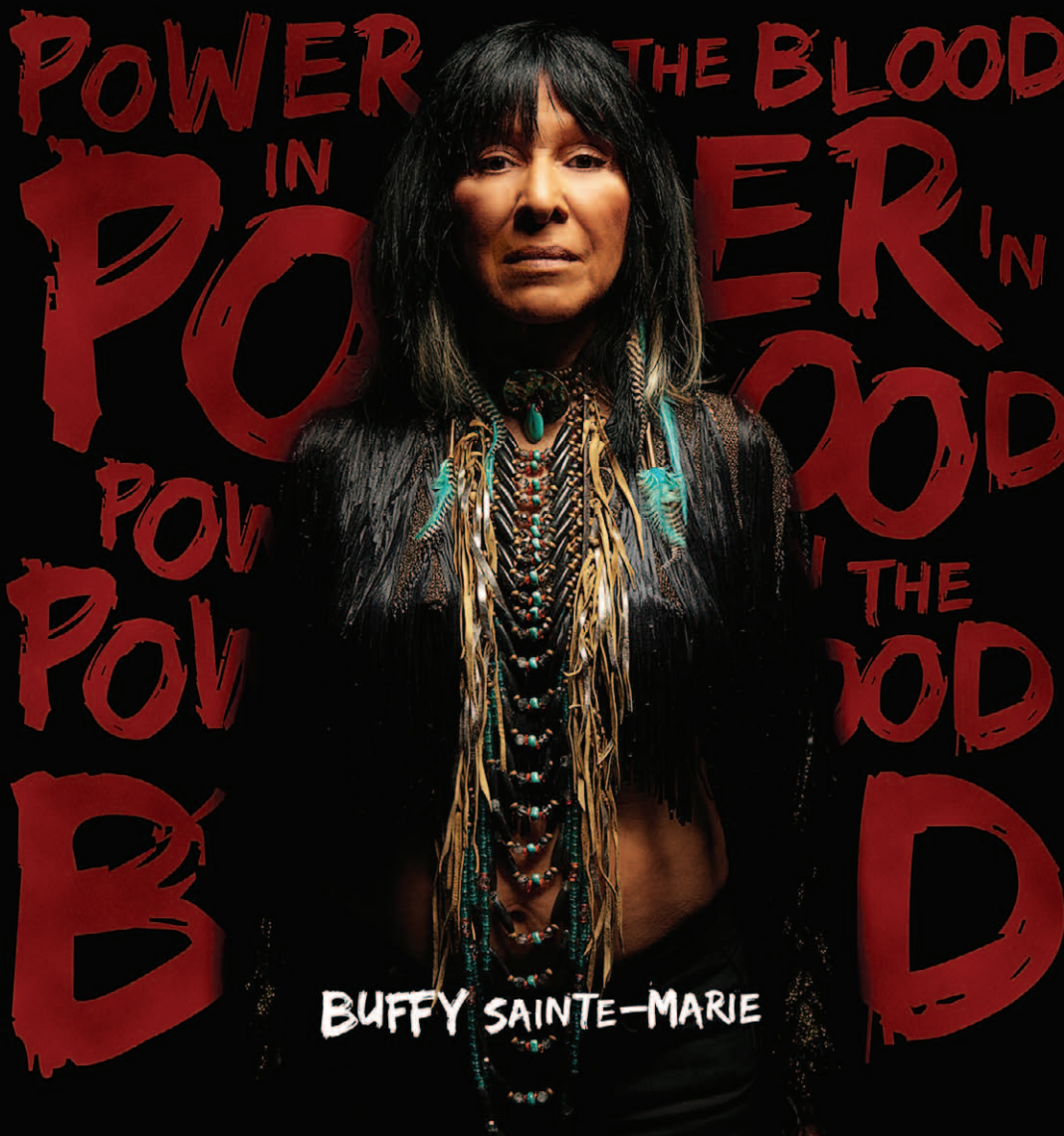
“Ever since *Running for the Drum* in 2009, I’ve been on the road with my band. Lots of countries, cities, Reserves, everything. I had all these songs, new and old, in my head. Some we perform every night, but had never recorded, or else had recorded during a time when I couldn’t get any airplay, so few people had ever heard them. I didn’t want to continue touring without a new record.

“I love thinking and I recognize and value the core of a universal idea simplified into a three-minute song, which can be as powerful as a 400-page book. What appealed to me in folk music were the songs that have lasted for generations, but I wasn’t trying to be one of those guys. I wanted to give people something original.

“To me, a good song stays relevant even though other good ones come along. I feel like all my songs are coming from the three-year-old I’ll always be, and the ones I keep loving are fresh to me every time I perform them.

“The album and concerts include an ode to the sanctity of life, *We Are Circling*, and the splendour of Mother Nature, *Carry It On*, which is euphoric and hopefully, empowering. I found inspiration in UB40’s *Sing Our Own Song*, which is closely associated with Nelson Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement. But I gave it my own pow-wow spin. *Farm in the Middle of Nowhere* is what I call rockabilly Hawaiian – what my life is like these days – in the spirit of country music and *Ke Saki-hitin Awasis* is another love song to Native culture.

“Some people like the love songs, others like the rockers, or the ones with a strong message. Some of the



I’m upside down with a mean, 27-hour Australia-Hong Kong-London jet-lag, hoping my band can survive the pace,” reports Buffy Sainte-Marie, who turned 74 in February. She is referring to her whirlwind, globe-trotting tour in advance of the release of her album, *Power in the Blood*, on May 12. “It’s a beating, as we say, ha ha! In the UK and Canada later this month. Thanks for sharing my take and texts on the state of the world,” she says.

Her 18th album, *Power in the Blood*, the first in eight years, begins where it all started – with *It’s My Way* from her 1964 debut. These were the first steps of her

ceaseless creativity and constant motion on her journey to finding her identity and conviction of self.

She also re-arranged *Not the Lovin’ Kind* and *Generation*, to be shared anew from the 70s ‘blacklist years’ when Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) called her a “loose cannon” and an “artist to be suppressed,” sentiments actively shared by Richard Nixon. The Cree singer-songwriter, activist, educator and visual artist – whose countless awards include an Oscar, Juno, Golden Globe and Grammys – became a regular on TV’s *Sesame Street*, during which she breast-fed her son on-air, in protest against baby formulas. In *Power in the Blood*,

## Cradleboard Teaching Project

photo © Alexander Potapov

Buffy Sainte-Marie virtually invented the role of Native American international activist pop star. Her concern for protecting indigenous intellectual property and her distaste for the exploitation of Native American artists and performers has kept her in the forefront of activism in the arts for over 50 years. Since 1969, she has operated the Nihewan Foundation for Native American Education, whose Cradleboard Teaching Project serves children and teachers worldwide, free and online ([www.cradleboard.org](http://www.cradleboard.org)).

During the 1990s, Buffy Sainte-Marie focused her time mostly on the Cradleboard Teaching Project, using her multimedia skills to create accurate, enriching core curriculum based in Native American cultural perspectives. The American Indian College Fund presented her with their Lifetime Achievement Award. Cradleboard’s interactive multimedia CD-ROM, *Science: Through Native American Eyes*, features Buffy on camera as well as producer and director.

Visit [www.cradleboard.org](http://www.cradleboard.org) to learn more.



classics people always ask for – like *Universal Soldier*, *Until It's Time for You to Go* and *Up Where We Belong* – they're all so different from each other, go figgur!"

"*Power in the Blood* was written by my friends Alabama 3, about being ready for war. I modified it with their blessing, including, 'When that call it comes/ I will say, no no no to war.' Power can be the feudal system and the war racket or it can mean the power in your own DNA, your own brains and what you do in your own life. My poem, *The War Racket*, posted on my website at buffysainte-marie.com is my understanding that war is primarily about money and money laundering, re-routing all available monies from general domestic wel-



Myself, I get to be global as well as local, but at home we must insist on local politicians' proper response to the issues. We've got to encourage their courage, support their positive efforts and howl against their continued collusion with the corporation governments, whether on the Reserve or in Ottawa.

fare – education, arts, public health, etc., into the bank accounts of the money junkies at the top. In modern warfare, in my opinion, both sides are obscene. The power racket has been going on since before the *Old Testament*, yet there have always been people like Jesus, Gandhi and MLK and there still are and a lot of change is up to you and me like in *Universal Soldier*."

To help shape *Power in the Blood*, she enlisted three different producers, including Chris Birkett. It's their fourth collaboration. "She pays a lot of attention to her lyrics," he says, "and when Buffy says something, she actually means something."

A good example is *The Uranium War*; with such lines as:  
*An enemy – I watched it grow*  
*Corporate greed and lust for gold*  
*And coal and oil*  
*and hey now, uranium*  
*Keep the Indians under your thumb*  
*Pray like Hell when your*  
*bad times come*  
*Roll em up, strip em up,*  
*get em' with a gun.*

**Bruce Mason:** You read the comment by Joan Baez in *Common Ground* last year: "This world is f\*\*king falling apart and I don't think it even matters who's quibbling with who. Global warming is going to get us and that's going to be it."

**Buffy Sainte-Marie:** "She's right, but personally I

continue to keep my nose on the joy trail and if something is missing, I try to create it. Just do my best every day, take joy wherever I can, especially with animals. To me, the world and everything in it is always in a state of ripening – babies, elders, bozos and angels. *This is how we grow; this is how we get to know* (from *We Are Circling*). The human race is young; none of us is very mature, but we all can keep learning so don't give up.

**BM:** Your recording, education and artwork utilizes computers and digital technology. Do you fear privacy loss and surveillance?

**BSM:** Same ol, same ol. There have always been crooks and they always have the same technology we have. Whatja' think, it was gonna change just because you got a smart phone? They did too. But don't give up. Support what you love where you find it, heal and protect the sacred when you get a chance and create something better out of whatever comes along, online and in the real world. Politically and personally, take care of your link with Life!"

**BM:** As a global citizen, artist, activist, etc., what do you hear about Canada and Stephen Harper?

**BSM:** How are we viewed? In Australia, in the USA, in Europe, citizens are seeing Canadians as fellow victims of the right wing destruction of the environment.

**BM:** What do you think of the rise of Aboriginal culture, internationally, particularly among women?

**BSM:** Thanks for the question. Yes, yes, there is good news and it's lovely that other people know we're here. But tragic realities change so slowly. In my experience, 'we' become trendy every now and then when Hollywood makes a movie, which seems to be about us – *Soldier Blue*, *Little Big Man*, *Dances With Wolves*, etc. – and fashion magazines feature fringe and war paint and Cher gets on a horse in a mini skirt. Unfortunately, the public buys it and thinks they've helped us out somehow.

On the other hand, the women who started Idle No More and the huge numbers of like-minded people of all genders, indigenous and non-indigenous, are a genuine grassroots response to the realities we all face today – most extremely in the front lines of Indian country: the destruction of the environment and the ongoing horror of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

My point is not just to praise and support this mass courageous activism, but also to call for continued ripening and growing positive action on every level. Myself, I get to be global as well as local, but at home we must insist on local politicians' proper response to the issues. We've got to encourage their courage, support their positive efforts and howl against their continued collusion with the corporation governments, whether on the Reserve or in Ottawa. Politics is a greasy pipe and our citizen responsibility doesn't end with voting; we still need to drive the car in the right direction.

One good thing is that a lot more people are now seeing the big racket for what it is. Even if you haven't seen what I saw at [the] Fort McMurray tar sands – the heartless fracking in the arboreal forests, turning it into the surface of the Moon – even if you haven't seen what I've seen as GMO companies spray their untested, restricted pesticides all over Hawaii and emergency room doctors have no idea what haemorrhaging children have contracted, people everywhere *are* seeing the climate changes in their own neighbourhoods, the middle class disappearing and the tiny collection of "brand franchises" – Prada, Chanel, (read Naomi Klein's *No Logo*) – taking over every airport and shopping mall and becoming the new McDonald's and Burger King while the great creatives behind them are silenced by the accountants and lawyers running the corporations and putting local mom and pop stores out of business. It's pretty much the moneychangers taking over the temple, nothing new, but now everybody can see it. ◀

**Bruce Mason** is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of *Our Clinic*. [brucemason@shaw.ca](mailto:brucemason@shaw.ca)



## ❖ Buffy Sainte-Marie in concert

April 26	Sidney, BC
April 28	Salt Spring Island, BC
April 29	Campbell River, BC
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May 1	Capilano University North Vancouver

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[http://buffysainte-marie.com/?page\\_id=9](http://buffysainte-marie.com/?page_id=9)



# GMO BITES

## GMO Inquiry reveals where GMOs are in Canada In the ground and on our plates

by Lucy Sharratt

“Where in the world are GM crops and foods?” It should be an easy question to answer, but our government does not provide that information. The first report from CBAN’s GMO Inquiry 2015 is out and answers this question for the first time.

We all want to know where the genetically modified (GM) foods are on our grocery store shelves, but without mandatory labelling it takes some major detective work to find out.

It has been 20 years since the first genetically modified (GM, also called genetically engineered) crop was approved in Canada. Currently, four GM crops grow in fields across this country – GM canola, corn, soy and white sugar beet – and the government does not monitor how much of each GM crop is grown.

Statistics Canada does tell us how much GM soy and corn are grown in Quebec and Ontario, but other provinces also grow some soy and corn as well as GM canola and GM sugar beet. By examining these numbers, reports from the US government, information from industry and international organizations, combined with CBAN’s own

market analysis and understanding of Canadian government regulations, CBAN has clarified the status of GM crops in Canada.

Approximately 95% of all the canola grown in Canada is GM and almost 100% of all the white sugar beet (grown for sugar processing) is Monsanto’s GM herbicide tolerant Roundup Ready sugar beet. Surprisingly, the amount of GM soy is actually far less than GM canola and sugar beet. In fact, around 60% of the soybeans produced in Canada are GM. This is because we export a lot of non-GM food-grade soybeans to Japan, and even to the US, for processing into tofu and soymilk. Other soybeans in Canada, produced for crushing into animal feed and oil for processed foods, are mostly GM.

Around 80% of all the grain corn in Canada is GM, but another major finding from CBAN’s research confirms there is very little GM sweet corn grown in the world. While we still don’t know exactly how much is grown, a recent international report validates what CBAN discovered from its own test results: Last year, CBAN tested and found only one GM sweet corn

### GM CROPS GROWN IN CANADA

CROP	TRAIT	WHERE ON THE SHELVES
1. Corn	Insect resistant, herbicide tolerant	Corn flakes • Corn chips • Cornstarch • Corn syrup • Corn oil and other corn ingredients in processed foods • Sweeteners like glucose and fructose • Eggs, milk and meat* • Some sweet corn
2. Canola	Herbicide tolerant	Canola oil • Eggs, milk and meat*
3. Soy	Herbicide tolerant	Soy oil • Soy protein • Soy lecithin • Tofu • Soy beverages • Soy puddings • Eggs, milk and meat*
4. Sugar beet	Herbicide tolerant	Sugar

\* GM grains are commonly fed to livestock and dairy cows.

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[GMOinquiry.ca](http://GMOinquiry.ca)

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among 137 samples of fresh corn from nine provinces.

Finding out where GM foods are on Canada’s grocery store shelves is even more complicated because Canada regulates GM foods inside a broader category called “novel foods,” which includes non-GM foods. Further, the government does not specify which GM foods are actually on the market. This easily leads to

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confusion about what is being sold in our grocery stores.

For instance, GM tomatoes, GM rice and GM wheat are not on the market anywhere in the world. Ninety-nine percent of all the GM crops grown around the world are varieties of GM corn, soy, cotton and canola. More than 99% of these are either (or both) herbicide-tolerant and insect-resistant. It has been this way for the past 20 years, but it could all change very soon. In February,

We all want to know where the genetically modified (GM) foods are on our grocery store shelves, but without mandatory labelling it takes some major detective work to find out



the US government approved the GM “non-browning” apple and if our federal government approves it as well, the GM apple would be the first GM fruit grown in Canada.

CBAN’s new report is the result of a public interest group in Canada – for the first time – digging for the details of where GM crops are in the ground, ultimately ending up on our plates.

This information is critical for the next step in CBAN’s GMO Inquiry 2015, which is to investigate the impacts of GMOs on the environment, consumers and farmers.

Please see the summary pamphlet and detailed report at [www.GMOinquiry.ca](http://www.GMOinquiry.ca)

Lucy Sharratt is the coordinator at the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN), [www.cban.ca](http://www.cban.ca)



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Angelika Bendrich, RPC, CNP

**12:00 - 1:30 pm Nutritional Pathology**  
Inflammation: The Underlying Cause to all Chronic Disease?  
With Dr. Jason Marr, BScH, ND

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Detoxing: Myth or Fact? Looking at the science behind the hype to come to our own conclusions  
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# The micro and macro of nutrients

There are two types of nutrients we need for our survival: micronutrients and macronutrients. This division is based on the quantity of a nutrient the body needs. We need micronutrients in small amounts and macronutrients in large amounts. Claimed by macrobiotic enthusiasts, a careful balance of micronutrients and macronutrients need to be present to carry out this way of eating and (many say) spiritual way of life, with respect to yin and yang. Studies have shown that eating a macrobiotic diet may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and other chronic diseases and prevent and cure some forms of cancer, though long-term research studies are ongoing.

## Micronutrients



Micronutrients are nutrients the human body needs in minute amounts to function properly; a deficiency leads to critical health problems. Good nutrition from eating a healthy diet is the foundation of any wellness program. The goal is to get an adequate amount of micronutrients in your diet by eating a large variety of healthy foods at a total caloric rate that will either maintain your present body weight

or achieve your ideal body weight over a reasonably long period of time. Most of the diseases and conditions people face today are due to a deficiency of micronutrients. The World Health Organization (WHO) says if we ensure elimination of micronutrient deficiency, labour efficiency will increase multifold.

## A list of micronutrients

**Vitamins:** Vitamins A, B, C, D, E and K and carotenoids.

**Minerals:** boron, calcium, chloride, chromium, cobalt, copper, fluoride, iodine, iron, magnesium, manganese, molybdenum, phosphorous, potassium, selenium, sodium and zinc.

**Organic acids:** Acetic acid, citric acid, lactic acid, malic acid, choline and taurine.

It is better to get these micronutrients from natural sources such as fruits and vegetables.



## Macronutrients

Macronutrients – proteins, carbohydrates and fats – constitute the bulk of the food we eat.

**Proteins** are called the building blocks of life. It is what most of our body is made up of. Proteins themselves are made of amino acids. Some good sources of protein include fish, poultry, meat, legumes, soy, eggs, milk and milk products.

**Carbohydrates** are made up of sugar or starches. They are the main energy providers for our body. Excess carbohydrates are converted into fat and stored in our body. All foods have carbohydrates in some measure.

**Fats** are substances that your body stores for future use. Although most people think that fats are to be avoided altogether, there is a distinction to be made. There are good fats and bad fats and good fats are very necessary for the proper functioning of the body.

Proteins, carbohydrates and fats are to be eaten in proper proportion. If they are not, lifestyle diseases result.

## The nutrition of micronutrients

The bioavailability of food consumed is an important issue in nutrition. But trying to calculate quantitatively how much of each known nutrient you are getting out of your diet is both a waste of time and impossible to do. It is recommended you do not try to quantify your intake of specific micronutrients from your diet.



## Highlights of bioavailability of nutrients

Good nutrition from eating a healthy diet is the foundation of the biomedical model of natural health.

Any change in your diet, however small, that improves your natural health is a step in the right direction.

Micronutrients include vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals and water.

Micronutrients do not provide any energy to the body.

Poor nutrition is the result of consuming too little, too much or the wrong kinds of food on a regular basis. Food science, a root cause of poor nutrition, transforms natural, whole foods into garbage that fills the belly while developing excessive human appetites for fat, sugar and salt. Avoiding poor nutrition simply means refusing to eat junk food.

Nutrients compete with other nutrients for absorption. Some nutrients will enhance/reduce the amounts of other nutrients being absorbed by your body.

## Food processing related factors

There is no best way to prepare food. Consuming fruits and vegetables raw enhances the absorption of some nutrients, whereas soaking and fermentation will increase the absorption of minerals in legumes and grains to the detriment of the water-soluble nutrients. Cooking by breaking down fibre generally increases digestibility of many nutrients, while all the oil soluble nutrients require the presence of fat for best absorption.

## The macrobiotic diet

A macrobiotic diet isn't simply a diet plan. It's a way of life. If you are drawn to the concept of eating a natural, organic, plant-based diet (with a little fish) and embrace a Zen-like spirituality in both your life and food selections, a macrobiotic diet may be for you. Originally from Japan, the principle behind the macrobiotic diet combines tenets of Zen Buddhism with a Western-style vegetarian diet. Much more than a list of recommended foods, it is all about a spiritualism that transcends lifestyle, attitude and diet practices. The word "macrobiotic" comes from the Greek and essentially means "long life" or "great life."

The macrobiotic diet regimen supports an Eastern philosophy of balancing foods to attain a balance of yin and yang. To achieve that balance, foods are paired based on their sour, sharp, salty, sweet or bitter characteristics. Yin foods are cold, sweet and passive while yang foods are hot, salty and aggressive. Some foods are prohibited because they contain toxins or fall on the far end of the spectrum, making it difficult to achieve and respect a Zen-like balance.

Early versions of the macrobiotic diet included several stages that became progressively more restrictive, ending with a diet of brown rice and water – considered the ultimate in yin and yang. Although not scientifically proven, a macrobiotic diet of wholesome, nutritious foods may protect against cancer and other chronic diseases.

Focus on healthy foods that are low in fat and high in fibre. Be mindful of your daily intake of vitamins D and B12, iron, protein and calcium for people embracing the macrobiotic diet may be deficient in them. Whenever people eliminate food groups, it can create deficiencies and affect their health. Remember to balance the yin and yang. If you're interested in trying a macrobiotic diet, start slowly. First, incorporate just a few concepts such as eating less unprocessed food. Then add more whole grains and so on.



## What you can eat

Practitioners of the macrobiotic diet prefer locally grown, natural foods prepared and eaten in the traditional manner, such as baking, boiling and steaming. Lots of grains, vegetables, beans, fermented soy and soups – supplemented with small amounts of fish, nuts, seeds and fruits – are the basis of the macrobiotic diet menu. Other natural products, however, may be included to accommodate individual needs or during dietary transition.

It is essentially a "flexitarian" diet plan – a mostly vegetarian diet that allows occasional meat or fish – with rules governing eating, cooking and lifestyle practices such as eating slowly and chewing food thoroughly. Foods should be consumed in their most natural state and processed foods are not recommended. Other excluded foods are fatty meats, most dairy, sugars, coffee, caffeinated tea, stimulating beverages, alcohol, chocolate, refined flour, very hot spices, chemicals and preservatives, poultry, potatoes and zucchini. The diet also allows you to consume certain fruits and vegetables such as tomatoes, eggplant and peppers in limited quantities. Excluded foods are considered to be extreme, over stimulating, or too concentrated and therefore not capable of achieving balance.

## Breakdown of a typical macrobiotic diet

Whole grains, especially brown rice: 50-60%

Vegetables (and seaweed): 25-30%

Beans: 5-10%

Fish, nuts, seeds, fruits, miso soup: 5-20%

Soup (made from ingredients above 1-2 cups/day)



Followers of the macrobiotic diet believe food and food quality impact health, happiness and well being. Eating natural food that is closer to the earth and less processed is healthier for the body and soul. <

Source: [www.truthnhealth.com](http://www.truthnhealth.com). Nancy Lin DeGregori, Ph.D., is the founder and CEO of TruthNhealth.com and the author of An Etiological Theory of Chronic Disease. She is also a holistic nutrition/health coach and fitness consultant.



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# NEWSBITES

## Scientists concerned about sugar

The sugar industry is at it again. The official recommendations on updating the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans were just released and they include a critical step forward in curbing the growing health problems of sugar overconsumption by recommending a limit and label on added sugar – a step the sugar industry is actively opposing.

We know this is a public health common sense measure; the science clearly shows the link between overconsumption of sugar and increases in rates of obesity, diabetes and heart disease. In fact, the recommendation for the US Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to both label and limit added sugar has come up before. But food industry has fought tooth and nail on this, employing their usual tactics: attack the science, spread misinformation, fund junk science, infiltrate academia and influence policy. And we're seeing the same tactics again.

The Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's decision to recommend limiting and labelling added sugar again – despite opposition from sugar interests – is already a small victory for science. But making the recommendation a reality requires your help. We need

to combat the industry's efforts to push their profits over our public health and build a strong demand for HHS and USDA to follow the science.

Sign the petition urging the USDA and HHS to follow the science-based recommendation to limit and label added sugar. Take action at <http://action.ucsusa.org/site/R?i=F0nWn4dEKiEFfh61Vakaxg>

From the Union of Concerned Scientists, [ucsusa.org](http://ucsusa.org)

## Water sells cheap Too cheap

The government of BC is about to start charging corporations for groundwater used for bottled water. This is good. But is \$2.25 per million litres enough?


Under the new pricing structure, corporations will be able to buy up Canada's water for next to nothing. At a time when water is in short supply globally, it is a serious concern that private industry can draw limitless amounts of this natural resource to sell at a profit. The chairman of Nestlé, one of those corporations, says that "extremist" NGOs are responsible for the idea that water is a human right. Human right? Maybe. But if so, when it comes to selling human rights in a plastic bottle, a fair market price is in order.

In other words, the government of BC needs to charge a fair price for a most precious resource.

The irony is that the new water legislation is fairly appropriate when it comes to individuals' water use. But corporations, once again, are given a very good deal compared to an ordinary citizen. If a Canadian were to bottle enough groundwater to fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool, they'd pay \$180. A bottled water company will pay only \$6.25.

BC has some of the purest, cleanest and most delicious water in the world and bottled water companies think nothing of taking it out of the ground for a pittance and selling it back in a plastic bottle. So does the government, apparently. This new pricing structure, which was supposed to fix the problem of freeloading corporations, does not go far enough at a time when many parts of the world are facing extreme water shortages.

In response, SumOfUs members across the globe have mobilized in the hundreds of thousands to call for an end to industrial exploitation of water rights. From Pakistan to Canada, they are circulating a petition to make sure large corporations like Nestlé pay a fair price.

Call on the government of BC to stop allowing corporate freeloaders from extracting Canada's water for next to nothing. Sign the petition at <http://action.sumofus.org/a/bc-bottled-water/> 

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# Informed consent

## Take the 'Kingdom of Alanastan' statins quiz

If you haven't heard the term "informed consent" before, it's time you did. This term implies that anytime a medical treatment is offered to you, it must be explained in sufficient detail – as to its possible benefits and harms – so you can make a fully informed assessment of what to expect. This is vital because, after all, it's you, the patient, who is going to put the pill in your mouth and you need to be fully aware of the consequences. I have this nagging feeling that some of our medical decisions could hardly be characterized as having been made after our being fully informed. Sometimes that might not matter. And sometimes that's the most important thing of all.

The world of prescription drugs we all inhabit often finds no place for "informed consent" and nobody actually tests patients to see if they have even the most basic knowledge of the drug they are prescribed. Even if you are told to take the drug "for the rest of your life," which is likely if you are prescribed a statin to fight your high cholesterol, you might not have the faintest clue of what it will do. I plan to change that when I'm put in charge.

In the Kingdom of Alanastan (motto: we put the "inform" in "informed consent"), things are very differ-

ent. As its beneficent ruler, I've decreed that, before you line up at the pharmacy to fill your prescription, you have to prove you're taking the drug with fully informed consent. So your doctor wants you to take a statin? Fine. In my kingdom, you must first correctly answer a few simple skill-testing questions. The science behind this quiz comes from a meta-analysis of 11 studies on statins involving over 65,000 patients and is about the most reliable assessment of the drugs I can find.

### The Kingdom of Alanastan quiz to establish statin-informed consent:

Consider this scenario: There are two equal groups of 100 people who all have 'high cholesterol,' but no history of heart disease. In every respect, these two groups are equal, except:

Group A took a statin, a drug like Crestor, everyday, for the next five years.

Group B did nothing and they lived their lives as they always had.

Over the next five years:

How many more lives were saved in Group A than Group B due to the statin?

a) 10, b) 5, c) 1, d) 0

How many in Group A were prevented from having a heart attack because of the statin?

a) 10, b) 5, c) 0, d) 1

How many more people in Group A developed diabetes, over Group B, because of the statin?

a) 20, b) 10, c) 0, d) 2

How many in Group A developed muscle damage because of the statin?

a) 35, b) 25, c) 15, d) 10

How much did the members of Group A collectively pay for five years' worth of Crestor if they shopped at an average pharmacy in Vancouver and paid for the brand-name drug, not the generic?

a) \$5,000, b) \$9,500, c) \$28,600, d) \$340,000

The right answer to every question is "d."

Now go ahead and review the answers. Did you get any wrong? Hmm. I'm sorry, but when that happens in the Kingdom of Alanastan, the pharmacist pulls out a large stamp that says DENIED in bold, red letters. He then stamps your prescription and hands it back to you, saying something like, "Sorry Ma'am, you failed the informed consent quiz and my professional license prevents me from allowing you to have this prescription. Have a nice day."

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According to BC's Health care consent legislation, getting consent is the responsibility of whomever is "providing or proposing to provide an adult with health care." With a drug prescription, 'consent' presumably happens twice: when you agree to accept the prescription from the doctor and when you agree to get the drug from the pharmacy. Right?

Health care consent is not a trivial matter and in most jurisdictions there is legislation to make sure "valid consent" has certain requirements. In BC, for example, health care "consent" has to be given voluntarily, cannot be obtained by fraud or misrepresentation and the person consenting has to be capable of giving or refusing consent. Our legislation says the health care provider has to give the patient the "information a reasonable person would require to understand the proposed health care and make a decision about it." This includes information about the condition, the nature of the proposed healthcare and the "risks and benefits of the health care that a reasonable person would expect to be told about and any alternative courses of health care, including the option of having no health care at all."

While that might seem like a lot, I am wondering how much people learn about the marginal benefits of statins and the likelihood they'll develop diabetes or muscle weakness? Probably not much.

Part of the problem is that health care providers themselves may not be fully aware of the adverse effects related to statins. At least that's what emerges from the Spring 2015 issue of the *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* in an article by Dr. Duane Graveline.

Graveline is both a physician and an astronaut, who documented his experiences with statins in his book *Lipitor: Thief of Memory*. He says "physicians are often dismissive of patients' reports of weakness or cognitive decline." Graveline's just-published study looked into reports made to MedWatch in the US and found that between 2006 and 2013 there were almost 9,000 reports linking Lipitor and Crestor to "severe cognitive disturbance." He underscores this point by explaining that statins block a metabolic pathway, coenzyme Q10, which affects the body's energy producers as well as brain function. Graveline found reports on nearly 11,000 cases of rhabdomyolysis, a severe breakdown of muscle fibres, which is the most extreme kind of muscle destruction caused by statins.

Bad news continues to pour in from almost everywhere about statins. Just last month, the UK paper *Express* reported a research study linking statins to the development of Parkinson's disease, which seems to follow how the drug can affect the brain and nervous system. So you might ask why millions of people around the world are still taking statins when they do almost nothing and can have such horrible adverse effects.

I'd put part of the blame on the industry funded researchers who have actively hid statin adverse effect information. Currently, a scandal in the UK is erupting where Sir Rory Collins, head of one of the world's largest statin research teams, known as the Cholesterol Treatment Trialists, admitted he had not personally seen the full data on statin side effects. Really? He's been touting the benefits of statins for years, all the while blissfully ignorant of the adverse effects? Really?

Elsewhere, the literature provides ample information about other serious adverse reactions related to statins, including transient global amnesia, permanent muscle weakness, diabetes, ALS, cancer and serious neurodegenerative conditions. Even if you passed my quiz, can you say you're making a fully informed decision to take a statin?

The solution I see is that we all need to ask more questions about our drugs, like: Of 100 people like me, how many will be helped by the drug? How much will we be helped? How much could we be hurt? How long do I have to take it? How much will I spend? And is there anything better than this treatment you're proposing?

These are questions you might want to start practising. Because soon, when I'm king, I'll be instructing my pharmacists not to hand over your prescriptions until you've shown us you understand them and will use your medicines wisely. <

**Alan Cassels** has never been king of anything in his whole life and never will be, but hopes other kings will steal his ideas. He is a drug policy researcher in Victoria. You can read more of his writings at [www.alancassels.com](http://www.alancassels.com) or follow him on twitter @akecassels



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# Gut flora & your health

by Dr. Mercola

While many think of their brain as the organ in charge of their mental health, your gut may actually play a far more significant role. The big picture many of us understand is one of a microbial world that we just happen to be living in. Our actions interfere with these microbes and they in turn respond having more effects to our individual health as well as the entire environment.



Eating unpasteurized sauerkraut is one of the best ways to establish beneficial lactobacilli cultures in the digestive tract.

There is some truth to the old expression, having “dirt for brains.” The microbes in our soil, on our plants and in our stomachs are all a result of our actions. Antibiotics, herbicides, vaccines, pesticides and the tens of thousands of synthetic chemicals we’ve created all have impacts and result in reactions from these microbes.

Mounting research indicates that problems in your gut can directly impact your mental health, leading to issues like anxiety and depression. The gut-brain connection is well recognized as a basic tenet of physiology and medicine so this isn’t all that surprising even though it’s often overlooked. There’s also a wealth of evidence showing intestinal involvement in a variety of neurological diseases.

With this in mind, it should also be crystal clear that nourishing your gut flora is extremely important because in a very real sense you have two brains: one inside your skull and one in your gut and each needs its own vital nourishment.

The featured proof-of-concept study, conducted by researchers at UCLA, found that probiotics (beneficial bacteria) actually altered participants’ brain function. The study enlisted 36 women between the ages of 18 and 55 who were divided into three groups: 1) The treatment group ate yogurt containing several probiotics thought to have a beneficial impact on intestinal health, twice a day for one month. 2) Another group ate a “sham” product that looked and tasted like the yogurt but contained no probiotics. 3) The control group ate no product at all.

Compared to the controls, the women who consumed

probiotic yogurt had decreased activity in two brain regions that control central processing of emotion and sensation. During the resting brain scan, the treatment group also showed greater connectivity between a region known as the “periaqueductal grey” and areas of the pre-frontal cortex associated with cognition. In contrast, the control group showed greater connectivity of the periaqueductal grey to emotion and sensation-related regions.

## Your diet affects your mood and mental health

According to lead author Dr. Kirsten Tillisch, “Time and time again, we hear from patients that they never felt depressed or anxious until they started experiencing problems with their gut. Our study shows that the gut-brain connection is a two-way street... When we consider the implications of this work, the old sayings ‘you are what you eat’ and ‘gut feelings’ take on new meaning.”

The implications are particularly significant in our current era of rampant depression and emotional “malaise.” And the drug treatments available today are no better than they were 50 years ago. Clearly, we need a new approach, and diet is an obvious place to start.

Previous studies have confirmed that what you eat can alter the composition of your gut flora. Specifically, eating a high-vegetable, fibre-based diet produces a profoundly different composition of microbiota than a more typical western diet high in carbs and processed fats.

It’s important to realize you have neurons both in your brain and your gut – including neurons that produce neurotransmitters like serotonin. In fact, the greatest concentration of serotonin, which is involved in mood control, depression and aggression, is found in your intestines, not your brain! Perhaps this is one reason why antidepressants, which raise serotonin levels in your brain, are often ineffective in treating depression, whereas proper dietary changes often help.

## Gut bacteria are vulnerable to diet and lifestyle

Processed, refined foods in general will destroy healthy microflora and feed bad bacteria and yeast so limiting or eliminating these from your diet should be at the top of your list. Processed foods wreak havoc on your gut in a number of different ways. First, they are typically loaded with sugar and avoiding sugar (particularly fructose) is, in my view, based on the evidence, a critical aspect of preventing and/or treating depression. Not only will sugar compromise your beneficial gut bacteria by providing the preferred fuel for pathogenic bacteria, it also contributes to chronic inflammation throughout your body, including your brain.

Many contain artificial sweeteners and other synthetic additives that can wreak havoc with brain health. In fact, depression and panic attacks are two of the

reported side effects of aspartame. Preliminary findings presented at the 65th annual meeting of the American Academy of Neurology also report that drinking sweetened beverages – whether they’re sweetened with sugar or artificial sweeteners – is associated with an increased risk of depression.

Processed foods are also typically loaded with refined grains, which turn into sugar in your body. Wheat, in particular, has also been implicated in psychiatric problems, from depression to schizophrenia, due to wheat germ agglutinin (WGA), which has neurotoxic activity.

The majority of processed foods also contain genetically engineered (GE) ingredients (primarily corn and soy), which have been shown to be particularly detrimental to beneficial bacteria.



**Nourishing your gut flora is extremely important because in a very real sense you have *two brains*: one inside your skull and one in your gut and each needs its own vital nourishment.**

Your gut bacteria are also very sensitive to and can be harmed by: 1) Antibiotics, unless absolutely necessary and when you do, make sure to reseed your gut with fermented foods and/or a probiotics supplement. 2) Conventionally-raised meats and other animal products as CAFO animals are routinely fed low-dose antibiotics. 3) Plus genetically engineered grains, which have also been implicated in the destruction of gut flora. 4) Chlorinated and/or fluoridated water. 5) Antibacterial soap.

## Reseed your gut flora

Considering the fact that an estimated 80% of your immune system is located in your gut, reseed your gut with healthy bacteria is important for the prevention of virtually all disease, both physical and mental. The first step is to clean up your diet and lifestyle by avoiding the items listed above. Then, to actively reseed your gut with beneficial bacteria, you’ll want to:

## Radically reduce your sugar intake

I’m being repetitive here to drive home the point that you can take the best fermented foods and/or probiotic supplements, but if you fail to reduce your sugar intake you will sabotage your efforts to rebuild your gut flora. When you consume sugar at the level of the typical American, you are virtually guaranteed to have a preponderance of pathogenic bacteria, yeast and fungi, no matter what supplements you are taking. *continued p.22...*





# Finding your purpose

*If you can't figure out your purpose, figure out your passion, for your passion will lead you right to your purpose. — Bishop T.D. Jakes*

**M**y clients sometimes tell me they are struggling to find their purpose in life and wonder what it is they are 'supposed' to be doing. It is as though the right answer is hidden somewhere like the answers at the back of a math textbook.

They get frustrated because search as they might, they cannot think of what that purpose might be. But the answer can't be discovered solely by thinking it out because finding our purpose means aligning with our heart and soul. Asking what your purpose is is like asking, "Who should I love?" Love is something that happens when we feel aligned with another. It's not a decision we make or something we figure out.

**Listen to your heart and let it tell you what it wants. It can be like a treasure hunt.**

Those who sense they are living their purpose will tell you how they arrived at that place. Certainly, a rare few always knew, even as children, what they wanted to do in life. For most, however, it is more that they somehow found their way there.

How do we find our way to live in alignment with our highest purpose? There is some work involved. We first need to look at where we are in life and how we got there. Were our choices of work, partner or geographical location a result of conscious choosing or were they influenced by mere chance, the expectations of others or what we thought we *should* do.


Next, we need to look at what we love, what makes us happy, what we dream about and what our soul yearns for. And it is just as important to look at what we do not like and what makes us unhappy and stressed.

We need to let go of what others think of us. Some are afraid to be their true selves because they fear others will disapprove, love them less or not at all. Living in alignment with our authentic selves leads us to that thing we call our purpose.

Phrases like "I wish... I would love to... I have always wanted to... wouldn't it be wonderful if..." are the whisperings of our soul trying to get our attention and move us in a different direction. Too often, we think of these things as impossible and impractical and we dismiss them. There is the life I would love to live and the life I am living.

I once had a lucid dream where there was something I said I just could not do. But in my dream, I told myself this was a dream and I could do whatever I wanted. I have never forgotten that dream because when I woke up I felt the dream was telling me *life* is a dream and I *could* do whatever I wanted.

If you feel you are letting time pass and your heart is yearning for something more, you don't have to sell everything and move to a mountaintop somewhere. (But you can if you want!) You can start in little ways doing things you have always thought about, but never acted upon. It might mean moving out of your comfort zone and taking little risks.

Keep thinking about what you love, what inspires and excites you. Listen to your heart and let it tell you what it wants. It can be like a treasure hunt where you do one new thing and receive a clue that leads you to the next new thing. Your world and consciousness will begin to open up. This is the way you will be drawn to living the life you came here to live. 

**Gwen Randall-Young** is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, Deep Powerful Change hypnosis CDs and new "Creative Effective Relationships" series, visit [www.gwen.ca](http://www.gwen.ca)

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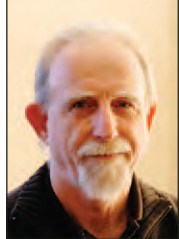
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## StarWise

April 2015

WESTERN tropical astrology is solar based – in whichever of the 12 signs of the zodiac are featured. Eastern Vedic astrology is lunar based and much of it is derived from the Moon's monthly motion through the 27 lunar mansions, also called nakshatras. Each nakshatra has a ruling planet and ruling deity and the ancients have been culling a great amount of information, knowledge and wisdom from the nakshatras for several thousand years. The material is very revealing – almost shocking – in its descriptive details regarding some of the personality traits and activities that unfold regarding the nakshatras. We can use the nakshatras to plan auspicious events such as marriages, travel, investments and at the start of a particular activity.

As an example, when we knew that game seven of the Stanley Cup finals was to take place on June 15, 2011, I looked up the positions of the planets and the nakshatra the Moon was travelling through. It was a full Moon, which always brings our emotions to their peak and the Moon was in the nakshatra called Mula. I became very alarmed and told everyone that would listen there would be a riot downtown and it would be wise to stay away from the core of the city on that evening. If you look up the meaning for Mula, you will find the deity is Nirrti, the goddess of destruction, calamity, violence, upheaval, cruelty, ego and anger.

Many of us were scratching our heads and wondering how seemingly good and decent people could stoop to such destructive, mindless acts. It was a potent mix of full Moon, large, angry mobs fuelled by alcohol and Mula's influence driven by the goddess Nirrti, ruler of destruction and upheaval. Logically, it would be wise to plan all major events according to the auspicious or inauspiciousness of the Moon's position in the nakshatras and you can bank on it that the ancients used this powerful tool in planning their major events. I'm pretty sure that Vancouver's retiring Chief Constable Jim Chu would not have been receptive to this loony information from an old hippy astrologer. He probably would have had me carted off to the loony bin. Of course, loony bin and lunatic are derivatives of luna, which is another name for the moon. The gist of this article is not fear mongering, but to help us become aware there is a great amount of knowledge in the stars that we could put to good use in our everyday lives.

**Mac McLaughlin** has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email [mac@macsstars.com](mailto:mac@macsstars.com) or call 604-731-1109.



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**ARIES** Mar 21 - Apr 19

You wrote the script for your present life activities long ago so you need not worry as to what it is you will do; if you don't know what to do, keep eliminating those things you don't like to do. This activity will make room for all forms of creative energy to manifest.



**TAURUS** Apr 20 - May 21

Mars dominates the scene throughout April. You're fired up about something or a lot of things. He gives a great boost of energy and enthusiasm. It's a good time to start any type of project especially ones that require a lot of effort. Mars also represents anger and frustration so measure twice and cut once.



**GEMINI** May 22 - Jun 20

Spring has sprung and in true Gemini fashion you will have much to do and very much to think about. It's a dual-pronged process in which you will be in a highly creative mode – living, loving and laughing – while, at the same time, some sadness creeps in and some things will have to go.



**CANCER** Jun 21 - Jul 22

Home and career activities dominate the calendar. Throw in a surprise or two and we have the recipe for a demanding and very active spring season. Friends feature strongly and health matters as well. Be pro-active, stay original and give your love and support to those that need it most. Love is in the air.



**LEO** Jul 23 - Aug 22

Jupiter brings his blessings to your table. Throughout April, those born from August 3 to 7 will receive the strongest play from this giant among the planets. Jupiter brings lessons of the heart and of the spirit. Any losses are followed by abundant gains. Travel, spirituality, expansion and general good fortune are in the works.



**VIRGO** Aug 23 - Sep 22

Virgo is all about the fine details of any given thing. Of course, this is the blessing you have to offer. But it might be wise to strive to look at the big picture as your life is about to expand in all kinds of ways. Plan for the long term. Roll up your sleeves and have at it.



**LIBRA** Sep 23 - Oct 22

The lunar eclipse on April 4 takes place in your sign. Those born from October 6-10 will glean the most from this lunation. You will have to do some fancy dancing and figuring in order to accommodate the new realities that have come into your life recently.



**SCORPIO** Oct 23 - Nov 21

Your ruler, Mars, moves through your opposite sign Taurus all month and indicates the probability of some sort of clash or confrontation. It doesn't have to be a negative thing at all. It might be you are confronting yourself and pushing yourself to new limits and higher standards. Finding the balance in all things is important, though.



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22 - Dec 21

Expansion and contraction are the two keywords to pay attention to now. On one level, there will be all kinds of opportunities to do quite well; on another level, there are areas you will have to cut back on. It doesn't make sense to me, but it should make sense to you.



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22 - Jan 19

What you resist persists and what you assist desists. Life is going to be like that and you might as well get into the groove and go along with the cosmic plan. Cappy loves to keep things stable and steady, but that's not the game right now. 'Transplant, regenerate and transform' is the mantra now.



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20 - Feb 19

The stars are leaning in your favour especially in the area of relationships. Partnerships and alliances are featured. You could win a long-standing dispute or court case. 'Steady-on' is the advice of the times. A move or renovation could be in the works. Of course, an internal renovation is desired as well.



**PISCES** Feb 20 - Mar 20

Personal earning capacity along with probable inheritances might be on your mind. But you have bigger fish to fry. Oops, sorry, I forgot you're from the fish family. You may feel a bit rudderless these days, but have no fear, you are on a journey to a cosmic destination. Be at peace with it all.



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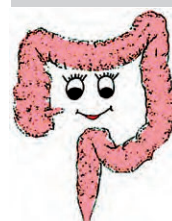
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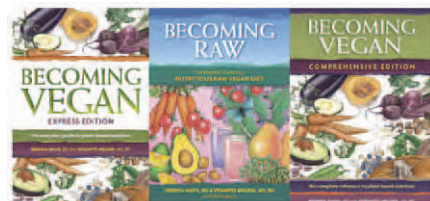
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...Gut flora from p.16

### Eat traditionally fermented, unpasteurized foods:

Fermented foods are the best route to optimal digestive health as long as you eat the traditionally made, unpasteurized versions. Some of the beneficial bacteria found in fermented foods are also excellent chelators of heavy metals and pesticides, which will also have a beneficial health effect by reducing your toxic load.

Healthy choices include fermented vegetables, Lassi, an Indian yoghurt drink, traditionally enjoyed before dinner; fermented milk, such as kefir and Natto (fermented soy). Ideally, you want to eat a variety of fermented foods to maximize the variety of bacteria you're consuming. Fermented vegetables, which are one of my new passions, are an excellent way to supply beneficial bacteria back into our gut. And, unlike

some other fermented foods, they tend to be palatable, if not downright delicious, to most people. As an added bonus, they can also be a great source of vitamin K2 if you ferment your own using the proper starter culture. Most high-quality probiotics supplements will only supply you with a fraction of the beneficial bacteria found in such homemade fermented veggies so it's your most economical route to optimal gut health as well.

### Take a high-quality probiotic supplement

Although I'm not a major proponent of taking many supplements (as I believe the majority of your nutrients need to come from food), probiotics are an exception if you don't eat fermented foods on a regular basis.

Cultured foods like raw milk yogurt and kefir, some

cheeses, and fermented vegetables are good sources of natural, healthy bacteria. So my strong recommendation would be to make cultured or fermented foods a regular part of your diet; this can be your primary strategy to optimize your body's good bacteria.

If you do not eat fermented foods on a regular basis, taking a high-quality probiotic supplement is definitely recommended. A probiotic supplement can be incredibly useful to help maintain a well-functioning digestive system when you stray from your healthy diet and consume excess grains or sugar or if you have to take antibiotics.

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# It's time to end the grizzly trophy hunt

**T**he spring grizzly kill starts April 1 and extends for several weeks, followed by a second fall season. By year's end, several hundred will have died at the hands of humans, close to 90% shot by trophy hunters, many of them foreign licence holders as the BC government plans to enact new regulations to allow hunters from outside BC to take 40% of grizzlies slated for killing. The government also plans to allow foreign interests and corporations to buy and run guide-outfitting territories previously run only by BC residents. Local hunting organizations say the new rules put them at a disadvantage.

According to the Vancouver Observer, hunting guide associations donated \$84,800 to BC political parties from 2005 to 2013, 84% to the BC Liberals. In the controversy over regulatory changes, we've lost touch with the fact the grizzly trophy hunt is horrific, regardless of whether bears are killed by resident hunters or big-game hunters who pay thousands of dollars for the chance to kill a bear here – often because it's illegal in their home countries.

Grizzlies once roamed much of North America... Habitat loss and overhunting have since shrunk their range by more than half. In Canada, 16 subgroups are on the brink of extinction, including nine in south-central BC and Alberta's entire grizzly population.

Just how many bears reside in BC is in dispute. The government claims more than 15,000 grizzlies live here, but Raincoast Conservation Foundation science director Chris Darimont, a University of Victoria conservation biologist, puts the number closer to the government's earlier estimate of 6,600 – before it doubled that in 1990 based on a single study in southeastern BC's Flathead area.

According to a Maclean's article, in 2000, the government "suppressed the work of one of its own biologists, Dionys de Leeuw, for suggesting the hunt was excessive and could be pushing the bears to extinction. De Leeuw was later suspended without



pay for having pursued the line of inquiry." The government then pursued a five-year legal battle with groups including Raincoast Conservation and Ecojustice to keep its grizzly kill data sealed.

Allan Thornton, president of the British Environmental Investigation Agency, which has studied BC grizzly management since the late 1990s, is blunt about the government's justification. "The British Columbia wildlife department does not use rigorous science," he told the Vancouver Observer. Even the economic case is shaky. Studies by the Centre for Responsible Travel and Raincoast Conservation conclude revenue from bear viewing is far higher than revenue from grizzly hunting... Hunting isn't the only threat... [but] hunting is one threat we can easily control.

According to polls, almost 90% of BC residents oppose hunting grizzlies for trophies, including many First Nations and food hunters. Scientists say it's unsustainable. The Coastal First Nations coalition has banned grizzly hunting in its territories, but the government doesn't recognize the ban. The Raincoast Conservation Foundation has bought hunting licences in an attempt to reduce bear kills on the coast.

Simply put, most British Columbians – and Canadians – are against the grizzly trophy hunt. It's time for the government to listen to the majority rather than industry donors and ban this barbaric and unsustainable practice. ◀

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation's senior editor Ian Hanington. Learn more at [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)



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MEDIA

INDEPENDENT MEDIA

Meghan Sali and Steve Anderson

## Copyright trolls could be on their way

**C**anada's system of copyright enforcement is internationally recognized as a next-generation approach – striking a balance between the rights of artists and creators and those of Internet users. Our system is designed to protect people from false claims of infringement and needless takedowns of legitimate online speech.

We have cause to be proud of this made-in-Canada solution that was won after a lengthy consultation and which only came fully into force this past January. The system is known as “notice-and-notice” and obliges an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to deliver notices alleging copyright infringement to its customers.

Compared with the US' system, the advantages of the Canadian approach are clear. In the US' “notice-and-takedown” system, content is removed by the host when a notice is received and, in most cases, before any decision is made by any court.

Unfortunately, when copyright law is misused, it can have such chilling effects on free speech that it acts as a form of censorship. Under copyright regimes that allow for takedown provisions, examples of this are increasing. The law is already being abused by big US media firms, which are sending huge volumes of notices to Canadians through their ISPs. In many cases, these notices contain information that misrepresents Canadian law, such as demanding settlements or threatening disconnection from the Internet – all on the basis of alleged infringement associated with an IP address, not a person.

Canadians have been calling on Industry Minister James Moore to fix the rules and implement a template system for notices to standardize the process. Minister Moore should also ensure Canadians receive accurate information about the possible legal ramifications of the notice, in the context of our domestic laws.

But what does all this have to do with Canada's Digital Privacy Act, Bill S-4? This Bill aims to amend Canada's privacy laws and implement much needed regulations around security breach disclosure requirements.

On the whole, the Bill has been welcomed by experts, except for one glaring flaw: the Bill expands the voluntary warrantless disclosures of personal information – not to law enforcement agencies, but rather to other private companies, and without the consent or even the knowledge of the person whose private information is being shared.

Under S-4, these voluntary disclosures are allowed where there is an investigation into a contract breach or alleged legal violation. While this may appear reasonable, it is a massively broad scope. Consider the dozens of contracts an individual signs every year without even reading them – especially the Terms of Service agreements.

Most grievously, S-4 would render the Canadian notice-and-notice system impotent, as ISPs would be empowered, with legal immunity, to disclose personal information about their customers to copyright trolls, without the customer's knowledge or consent.

The new system is already being exploited by US media firms; any extension of powers for ISPs to voluntarily make warrantless disclosures of private information would expose Canadians to great risk and undermine our domestic, democratic process.

Canadians are calling for James Moore to take action on this at <https://openmedia.org/shakedown> 

**Meghan Sali** is Campaigns Coordinator for Free Expression with OpenMedia.org. **Steve Anderson** is the executive director.

# Spin City

**W**e must look beyond sound bites coming from the multi-million dollar, publically funded Yes campaign for the transportation plebiscite. The evidence shows that the plan for the Broadway Corridor is more about implementing Metrotown-scale development than it is about transporting people.

With foreign capital taps wide open into local real estate and development, Vancouver is demonstrating the kind of deregulated extraction capitalism opposed by Naomi Klein in her latest book, *This Changes Everything*.

Manipulated growth projections are used to justify development we do not need. This is leading to overbuilding of about 2,000 units per four-year census period. By 2011, this amounted to a total of 22,000 unoccupied units. The point is not how do we force these expensive new units to be rented out, but why do we permit overbuilding?

Like the 1950s and 1960s neighbourhood clearing and urban renewal highway projects, this current tower oriented redevelopment of established neighbourhoods will prove to be a mistake.

Affordable older housing stock is being demolished to be replaced by tiny-unit, expensive cookie cutter condo towers or new monster houses. These are not affordable or viable options for most people or families in Vancouver. Increased development pressure will increase rents and the cost of home ownership.

## Lack of democracy, transparency and accountability breeds distrust.

This plebiscite is a crucial step to fulfilling the decade's long play initiated under former premier Gordon Campbell and Kevin Falcon when they set up TransLink to push forward the Canada Line for the winter Olympics.

As shown by the City of Vancouver's policies under Transportation 2040, and explained further through the City's KPMG report, development along Cambie at Oakridge and Marine Drive stations are examples of what to expect along the Broadway Corridor if the plebiscite is approved.

The Oakridge site was approved last year for upzoning to 11 towers of up to 45 storeys jammed around the mall. The scale certainly does not conform to neighbourhood character along the Broadway Corridor.

The Broadway Corridor has been identified by the City as a Frequent Transit Development Area (FTDA) for transit oriented development in the City's Regional Context Statement. This blankets Commercial Drive to UBC and 4th Avenue to 16th Avenue, through Grandview, Mount Pleasant, Fairview, Kitsilano and Point Grey.

The Urban Land Institute (ULI), an urban design think tank, stated in its 2014 report that there is enough zoning capacity in Central Broadway to support a subway since



Oakridge Mall redevelopment of 11 towers up to 45 storeys tall is an example of what the City has identified as potential development for the Broadway Corridor if a subway is approved.

the existing C3A zoning is only 60% built out. However, the City's current policies show that upzoning of the Broadway Corridor is the intended outcome if the subway is approved even though upzoning is not necessary.

We need to reconsider the impacts of an unsustainable tower model placed outside of the downtown core; this is proven to be the least possible energy efficient form of development.

Further, if the plebiscite passes and densification precedes the decades-long process (including phase 2 to build a subway to UBC), it will result in massively increased congestion for the next 20 years.

Instead of adding more electric trolley buses to service increased population, the use of more diesel spewing buses will result in increased GHG emissions, particulate pollution and traffic congestion. With most of the funding going into expensive rail technology, little will be left for expanding the electric trolley bus network that could substantially reduce noise and pollution at a fraction of the overall cost of rail. A subway is about \$250 million per km, streetcars \$40 million per km and electric trolley buses only \$1 million per km plus \$1 million per double trolley bus. Electric trolley buses, including rapid bus or express routes, could implement system-wide reductions in pollution and noise immediately at a very modest cost if more money went into this now.

There are also many unclear aspects to the Broadway plan such as which part is to be elevated and which is budgeted for a tunnelled subway. Will it be cut and cover or a bored tunnel? Will this affect small businesses along Broadway the same as the devastation on Cambie Street with the cut and cover for the Canada Line?

How will the civic amenity services – community centres, parks, libraries, daycare – for the increased concentration of development be paid for? Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) paid by development only cover about 10% of the total costs of development. Property taxes will have to increase again to subsidize the costs for civic amenities.

But if development is used to pay for transit as contem-

plated in the City's Transportation 2040 plan, the CACs will go towards paying for transit rather than civic amenities and facilities. This will require even more property tax subsidies to cover amenities.

The City of Vancouver's lack of democracy, transparency and accountability breeds distrust. Recently, the community of New Yaletown sued the city to reverse an arrogant development scheme. In the BC Supreme Court decision on January 27, 2015, it was ruled that the public must be provided all relevant information, presented concisely and intelligibly, in order to enable informed public input. That the City is appealing this court decision shows how little they are willing to be held to account and how they value development above democracy.

Further, unlike a referendum, this plebiscite does not require financial disclosure. There have been media reports that \$7 million in public tax funding has been given to the Yes campaign, with questions raised about additional unreported amounts from private sources that stand to gain from a Yes win, such as developers and transit infrastructure providers. Are public funds going to political parties and their supporters? We will never know what the funding sources are or where the money is being spent. But watch for all the advertisements they are buying with your money to trick you into voting Yes.

The questions about the plan for the Broadway Corridor need to be publically debated. A plan supported by the community ought to be reflected in City policy before the authorities are given more power and money. This plebiscite question is premature and should be voted down. ◀

**Elizabeth Murphy** is a private sector project manager and formerly a Property Development Officer for the City of Vancouver's Housing & Properties Department and for BC Housing.  
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# Cathedrals to cartoons

**O**n a six-week trip to Europe back in the eighties, I discovered I was a fiend for cathedrals. Each destination usually involved a trek from train station to cathedral to pub to hostel (not necessarily in that order). It made for a pleasing combination of the sacred and profane.

From the gothic stateliness of Notre Dame in Paris to the wedding cake opulence of Gaudí's La Sagrada Família in Barcelona, Europe is an open-air museum of huge Christian erections, so to speak. I marvelled at the medieval equivalents of NASA Moon missions – architectural projects that continued beyond the lives of the masons who began work on them.

Whether it be masonry and stained glass or reinforced steel and concrete, architecture stamps a culture's worldview onto the skyline. As mythologist Joseph Campbell once observed, when you approach a medieval town, the cathedral is the tallest structure on the horizon. When you approach an 18th century town, the palace is the literal peak of power. In a modern city, the tallest structures are the office buildings, particularly financial institutions.

In Spain, I was struck by the entirely different feel of Moorish architecture, built when Southern Europe was under the sway of Islam. While premodern Christian churches strain your neck with architectural feats of verticality, Moorish structures hunker closer to the ground with courtyards, running water and garden beds. The sense of deity conjured up in the latter places isn't so much a distant and faintly alarming authority as a divine presence in the here and now.

To tell the truth, I have never been a great believer in any of the sky god cults, as the late Gore Vidal dismissively described the three reigning monotheistic religions. But I can appreciate the will-to-beauty expressed in some of their finest works.

From its beginnings, Islam prohibited artistic recreations of people, animals and landscapes as competition with the first and greatest creator, Allah. But that doesn't mean art was or is absent in Islamic architecture. The walls and crenellated arches of the 11th century palace fortress Alhambra in Granada, Spain are embossed with beautiful, elaborate patterns. (The word Arabesque means an ornamental design consisting of intertwined flowing lines.)

I recall conversing at the Alhambra with three quiet, but friendly, Muslim visitors in white smocks. One of the men tried to explain something to me about spirit and breath. In typically tourist fashion, I responded by asking to take their picture. They consented somewhat reluctantly and lowered their gaze for the shot. Representational imagery again.

And this is why satirical depictions of Allah and his prophet Mohammed are such a sensitive issue to many Muslims; it is taking representational imagery to the furthest limit of blasphemy.



**“B**omb them, bomb them, keep bombing them, bomb them again!” screeched Fox News fixturer Jeanine Pirro on January 10th, in response to the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre in Paris three days earlier. The hyperventilating host of *Justice With Judge Jeanine* then introduced terrorism expert Steven Emerson, who claimed Birmingham is a no-go city for non-Muslims and that London police enforce Sharia law. Truth is a taffy-like substance to Fox News, but this was too much of a stretch even for Rupert Murdoch's junk news factory. Emerson apologized for his statements shortly after.

Islam, like Christianity and Judaism, makes for ideological coats of many colours. There is about as much difference between mystical Sufism and fundamentalist Wahhabism and as there is between Unitarianism and the Westboro Baptist Church (the “God hates fags” crowd). Yet most news consumers would be hard pressed to tell the difference between Sunni and Shiite sects.

Across the world, moderate Muslims are at constant risk of getting seriously “othered” – lumped in with militant religious extremists who consider martyrdom the highest expression of their faith. The latter find sitting targets among those who consider insulting such faith to be the highest expression of their liberal press freedom.

In the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre, guilt lies squarely on the side of the assassins. Yet the magazine's editor and cartoonist Stéphane Charbonnier went for reckless endangerment of his staff by green-lighting a number of inflammatory depictions of Muslims that were unredeemed by a shred of wit, artistry or cleverness. One cartoon from *Charlie Hebdo* portrayed a bearded, naked man in a turban, seen from a rear angle, with his genitals dangling and a large yellow star over his anus. The caption: “Mohammed: A star is born!”

As an editorial cartoonist, I wonder how any Muslim,

## Art, satire and spirituality in the 21st century

article and photo by Geoff Olson

fundamentalist or otherwise, would interpret such a cartoon as anything other than an attack on their culture or faith, to say nothing of some Islamophobic cartoons that have circulated in US media. One that comes to mind depicts a pregnant woman in a burqa with her belly exposed, in the form of a bomb (population bomb, get it?).

The Arab world is predominantly Muslim, and Arabic people are Semitic by definition. Cartoons of leering Jews with giant hooked noses and wild beards would be condemned as anti-Semitic in the western world, and rightly so. So why does that not hold for satirical depictions of Arabs?

As immigrants from former colonies of the west, Muslims are both cheap labour and cheap scapegoats when required. And when they are residents of their own land, convenient targets from the air. Being fodder for crass cartoons is just par for the course. (In my copy of *Charlie Hebdo*, cartoon Muslims are circled by flies.)

Needless to say, the “Je Suis Charlie” bandwagon left without me.

This is not to say there is no such thing as Islamic radicalism, and that's what makes the hypocrisy of the west so stunning. The US and UK are staunch allies of Saudi Arabia, even though it has one the worst human rights records in the world. The theocratic petrostate holds public beheadings, treats women as chattel, makes conversion to Christianity a capital offence, and funds militant religious extremism across the Arab world.

Yet when Saudi King Abdullah died on January 23rd, Westminster Abbey lowered the British flag at half-mast out of respect for an unelected figure that presided over this backwards regime. Effusive praise from President Obama and other world leaders followed.

**I**slam has never been any one thing. While the rest of Europe was plunged into a literal and figurative darkness, 11th-century Seville and other cities in Spain had lit streets. Scholars kept the flame of Ancient Greece alive in Arabic translations. Muslims, Jews and Christians lived peacefully together until Spain was united under Catholic rule in 1492, and Jews were forced to convert to Christianity under the Inquisition.

And now it appears a new darkness is descending – one that profits bankers, arms merchants and political demagogues, to say nothing of blinkered ideologues from megachurches, mosques, media outlets, and university “terror studies” departments.

Yet I remember how those light, airy courtyards in the Alhambra spoke to me in a language older than words, as did the stained glass windows of cathedrals across Europe. I'm surely not the only religious doubter to have breathed deeply and felt a great calm in these places. Ah, the link between spirit and breath; in retrospect, I suspect this is what those three gentleman in white smocks were trying to explain to me.

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ADAM MINTER



According to Adam Minter, author of *Junkyard Planet: Travels in the Billion-Dollar Trash Trade*, repair is the fourth “R” that fits perfectly with reduce, reuse and recycle.

“Virtually everyone knows very well that repairable items tend to be better built and longer lasting. And that’s what we really need if we’re going to continue being a consumption-driven society: longer-lasting goods,” says Minter, a veteran journalist and son of an American junkyard owner.

He is among the 5,000+ people taking part in the world’s largest recycling convention: ISRI 2015 Convention and Exposition, hosted by the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. (Vancouver April 21-25) Among the featured speakers is former US Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

Minter’s perspective is a first-hand view of the real global ground zero. His book is a journey into the vast, often hidden, industry that’s transforming the global economy and environment, from back-alley Chinese computer recycling operations to high-tech empires. And he has a great deal to share about smarter ways to take out the trash.

Stressing that recycling is only marginally better than landfills, Minter explains, “Recycling requires vast amounts of energy and water – aluminum and paper are two examples – and nothing is 100% recyclable.

READ IT! Bruce Mason

CULTURE

## Repair – the fourth “R”

“Most plastics can only go through the process once or twice. Paper, five or six times. As for metals, they can be recycled endlessly, but there’s always some lost in the process,” he adds.

Putting materials into the correct recycling bin is only part of the equation. Getting them into the hands of manufacturers who are going to utilize them is equally important.

Recycled automobiles are an amazing environmental success story, Minter notes. Deliver a car to a scrap yard and within a week or two it will be on its way to being transformed into a new vehicle.

We have a long way to go with other items – phones and pizza boxes, for example. “Apple tells us they’ll take an iPhone back for ‘responsible recycling.’ That’s true, up to a point. They don’t tell us that phones, like most electronics, are difficult to separate into components,” Minter reports.

“Try segregating plastic from the


metal – can’t be done. And iPhones that can’t be repaired, upgraded and sold for re-use, are shredded. A combination of magnets and other technologies pull out metal. The rest – especially the glass and plastic – is destined for the land-fill and incinerator. When a company offers recycling, consumers should ask how and how much. Conservatively, for iPhones, it’s below 50%.”

Pizza boxes are loaded with problems – grease and bits of food waste raise recycling costs and lower paper quality – but it’s not a big deal in Asia and other developing regions. Pizza boxes are fed into paper recycling lines in China, Malaysia and India, to name a few, Minter explains. “Sacrificing some quality for higher recycling rates is a trade-off that folks in rich, developed countries haven’t considered,” he adds.

“So nobody – especially an environmentalist – should feel as if they’ve somehow done the environment a big

favour by tossing something into a blue bin. If you really want to do the Earth a favour, reduce your consumption,” says Minter.

Minter is well aware that’s a hard task. “I don’t want to do it, either. So what’s the solution? I’m not sure there is one. But France is working on laws to require companies to tell consumers how long replacement parts will be available for their purchases; a fine idea and a really good way to start lengthening product lifespan.”

In the meantime, *Junkyard Planet* – now available in paperback – is an engaging, colourful, sometimes troubling true story of consumption, innovation and the ascent of a developing world that recognizes value where so-called developed nations still do not. 

For more information on the conference, visit [www.isri.org](http://www.isri.org) Scroll down and see ISRI Events on the right.

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(604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

### APR 11

**Canada's premiers are heading to Quebec City**  
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### APR 24-26

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Certificate Weekend Training Course. Friday  
Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395 + GST.  
Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818,  
www.pacificreflexology.com

### APR 25

**Free talk by John Q Adams,** practitioner &  
teacher of Christian Science healing  
Entitled, "If God is All, where is He at this  
moment?" 10-11AM @ Anvil Centre, 777  
Columbia St., near New Westminster Skytrain  
Station.

### APR 25-26

**"Unleash Your Gifts" Workshop:** A 2-day  
journey of discovering and exploring your  
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New Westminster. Info/registration:  
www.planetbliss.ca

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**Setting the Goal:** Turning Obstacles Into  
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6:30-9:30PM. Unity of Vancouver, 5840 Oak  
Street @ 41st. Bring display ad this page for  
free admission. Info www.clearmind.com

### MAY 7

**Langara College Health & Human Services  
Information Session:** 5-7:30PM, 601 W.  
Broadway, Unit M-11. See website for lecture  
schedule. Info: 604-323-5926, holistichealth@  
langara.bc.ca, www.langara.bc.ca/hhs

### MAY 11

**Free Shamanic Power Initiation & Open House**  
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Participants experience a hands-on Shamanic  
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### MAY 23

**Open House - Institute of Holistic Nutrition**  
(Vancouver): Course/Career opportunities,  
exhibits, lectures & more. 10AM-3:30PM,  
604 West Broadway, Ste. 300.  
604-558-4000. Lecture descriptions at  
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### JUN 5-7 & 12-14

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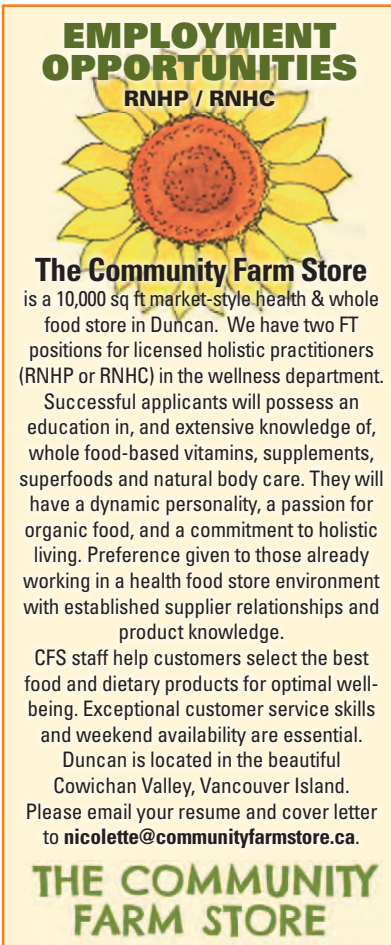
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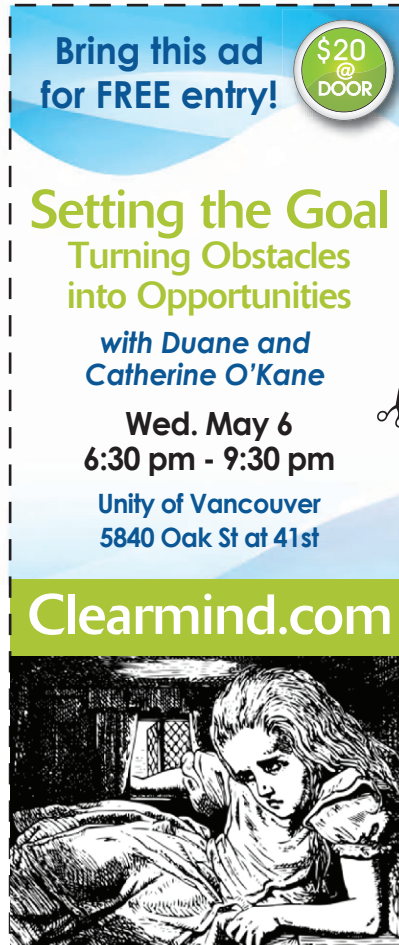
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Uranium is the key element for nuclear technology, whether civilian or military. Without uranium, there would be no nuclear weapons and no commercial

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Speakers include former Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan, US nuclear engineer Arnie Gundersen, Australian physician Helen Caldicott and many more. Aboriginal representation from Australia, Greenland, Africa and the US will complement the strong presence of aboriginal communities from Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

Before the discovery of nuclear fission between 1938-1939, uranium had no commercial market. Uranium mining and refining began in Canada during WWII, when Roosevelt, Churchill and Mackenzie King agreed to cooperate in the building of the world's first atomic bombs and oversee uranium supplies in the post-war era.

Canada's uranium industry first focused on weaponry, and boomed for 22 years. In 1965, Lester Pearson declared that uranium from Canada would be sold for peaceful purposes only. In 1974 however, India exploded its first A-bomb using plutonium (a uranium derivative) from a Canadian reactor given as a gift.

By 1978, it was revealed that radioactive waste from reactors would remain deadly for hundreds of thousands of years. Worse, all used nuclear fuel contains plutonium, the basic element used for atomic bombs.

Then came the meltdowns: Chalk River 1952; Windscale 1957; Three Mile Island 1979; Chernobyl 1986; Fukushima Daiichi 2011.

While Saskatchewan may be the Saudi Arabia of uranium – home to many productive mines and rich deposits – BC and Nova Scotia have banned uranium mining altogether.

To ban or not to ban? Quebec hasn't decided yet. There is a temporary moratorium on uranium mining in the province, pending the outcome of a generic environmental assessment. The report is expected by mid-May.

For more information and to register, visit [uranium2015.com/en](http://uranium2015.com/en) ☒

Gordon Edwards, Ph.D., is president of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility. He is a retired professor of mathematics and has served as a consultant on nuclear issues for over 40 years. [ccnr.org](http://ccnr.org)



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